

In The Nation

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The Unusual and Heavy Burden on Two Brothers

By ARTHUR KROCK

WASHINGTON, March 5—On the accuracy of the information that will be gathered by the Government of the United States with respect to developments in the Soviet world under the post-Stalin regime, and on the wisdom and courage displayed by the Government in basing policies and actions on the evaluation of this information, the security of this nation and the prospect of World War III will largely, if not wholly, depend. Since the Central Intelligence Agency will play the greatest role in gathering and evaluating this information, and the Department of State will lead in the formulation of consequent policies and acts for the President and the National Security Council, it has chanced that at the center of this fateful statecraft will be two brothers.

The Director of the C. I. A. is Allen Welsh Dulles. The Secretary of State is John Foster Dulles. Congress, or a majority of the N. S. C. that might disagree with the product of one or both brothers and influence the President to do likewise, could, of course, have a greater influence on United States policy and the fate of mankind than they. But perhaps it is not oversimplifying too much to conclude that the heaviest burden of responsibility save that imposed on the President has fallen on them.

The current period of pure speculation as to what will follow Stalin in Soviet foreign policy will probably not be succeeded by a period of solid information, however scant, for some time. But, while the new Administration as yet is compelled to speculate with the man in the street, it appears already to have evolved one sound course of planning and action. This is the course of caution. Beginning with the President's expression of sympathy with the Russian people, which C. D. Jackson and the Dulles brothers originated and shaped, the Administration has shown full awareness of the disasters that could follow any errors which hasty proposals or immature comment would surely produce. It can counsel, though it cannot oblige, members of Congress to exercise the same prudence (thus far they have). But the new Administration itself, in dealing with the event that was long expected but not prepared for by its predecessor, has been expert in its diplomacy.

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This correspondent has found no American authority on the Soviet Russian regime who expects in the immediate future any fundamental change in its structure, including that concerned principally with foreign policy, after its direction has been put in hands other than Stalin's. But it seems clear, though no responsible official has been unwise enough to say so at this time, that there are more favorable prospects in the satellite states and in the relations between Moscow and Peiping, and that these would be advanced by a power contest in the Kremlin. Therefore, it would appear that the priority task of our intelligence units now is to collect and soundly evaluate all information bearing on this possibility, and of the State Department to erect foreign policies on this base. While the armed services, the State Department and other Government units gather essential intelligence, the hub of the wheel is the C. I. A. under Allen Dulles. And in our system John Foster Dulles, as Secretary of State, formulates and conducts foreign policy for the President.

The evaluation of the information that is collected now takes the form of a "national estimate." This method of coordinating our several intelligence units, but not attempting to get unanimity when information and evaluation differ, is the contribution made by William H. Jackson after a ten-year struggle with the champions of unit separatism. By this arrangement several "national estimates" may result where a unanimous one would bring comfort to those who must make policy. But the effort is to get and, within the limits of possibility, identify the best opinion.

The Moscow bulletin that reported Stalin's collapse undoubtedly set the various intelligence units to work on producing the most important of these reports—a "crisis, or crash, national estimate." When they come together to pool their findings the director of the C. I. A. presides. If and when these findings are completed—in preliminary form they may already be—with or without full agreement on the part of the estimating units, they are turned over to the policy-makers for action. These, individually, are the President, the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense; and, collectively, the National Security Council, to which other high-ranking officials, now including the Secretary of the Treasury, belong.

The Dulles brothers on whom falls so great a part of this vast responsibility were long trained to assume it. Taken as a team, probably their training is unique in our history. The "Dioscuri," as they are known to colleagues familiar with Greek mythology, were endowed by good luck and nature with able, honorable, pious and healthy ancestors whose inheritance they have maintained. Their grandfather, John W. Foster, was a Secretary of State. Their uncle by marriage, Robert Lansing, was a Secretary of State. The brothers, of whom Foster is five years the senior, made outstanding scholarship records at Princeton, and both attained great success at the bar. To Foster Dulles the study and practice of diplomacy has been the parallel career of a lifetime. And the intelligence activity that Allen Dulles directed from Switzerland in World War II earned the rating of brilliant from associates from other nations in that difficult field.

The contribution these two will make to a future now perhaps even more perilous can hardly be overestimated for importance.